



Our Heart's Desire

Taken from The Way to the Kingdom of Heaven, by St. Innocent of Alaska.

Translated by Ezekiel Bozikis from the Greek translation of Metropolitan Nikopoleos Meletios)

God did not create Man to live only here, on earth. He created him to live with God and in God and to live not only one hundred years or one thousand years, but for all eternity.

Every human being who ever lived desires and longs for happiness and joy. He desires every good thing. He searches for happiness and blessings. This is no sin. This is not a fault in our nature. This is, for a human being, a sincere requirement of his soul.

But, in this world, nothing, except God, can fill a person's heart, and meet all of his emotional needs. Just as it is impossible for someone to put out a fire with coals and oil (only water can extinguish it!), so, likewise, it is impossible for a human being to satisfy the desires of his heart with worldly goods and pleasures. For only the grace of God is able to quench the thirst of our souls.

Everything that we want, we want only until we get it! Once we have it, we soon get bored with it! Good and desirable appear to us to be the things we don't have! Everything that we acquire, even if it is the most beautiful of its type in the world, seems not to be enough!

The best example of this is King Solomon. He was, as you know, that everything in his palace was made out of gold! He was so wise that even foreign monarchs sought his advice. He was so powerful that all his enemies feared him. Thus, Solomon, with all his power, wealth and wisdom, had the means to acquire whatever he wanted and satisfy all of his desires.

But, in spite of this, Solomon could never fill his heart! His desires tortured him. They tyrannized him more than they would have a poorer man. In the end, after he tried in vain to be satisfied by all that he had, he wrote in despair: "Vanity of vanities, all is vainty". Nothing could satisfy all his passions!

Truly, nothing exists in this world that can fully satisfy our passions. Even if a man should gain the whole world, and was able to experience everything

in it in a single moment, even then his heart would still be empty. Because the human heart can only be fully satisfied by the love of God. Thus, only God can fill the human heart and soul, and quench their thirst.

Therefore, brothers and sisters:

Do you want to live with God in His Kingdom? Become Christians - Orthodox Christians.

Do you want joy and happiness? Look for them in God.

Do you want your soul to experience complete satisfaction and contentment? Return to God, from Whom you've been separated because of your sins!

But, you must realize this: No one can by themselves, without Jesus Christ, turn to and approach God. Because our sins are like a high wall, they don't allow us to approach Him. And if Jesus Christ had not, out of compassion for us, come down from heaven and taken human flesh, and had He not demolished this dividing-wall, that separated us from God, by His death, we would have all been lost forever. Because we are all sinners. In sin we were conceived. As infants even, at an age when we didn't know anything and haven't done anything, sin was inside us like a seed.

Jesus Christ is our Saviour, our Redeemer, our Liberator, our Benefactor. And every human being, if he wants to, can return to God and enter His Heavenly Kingdom.

And know this: The way to the Kingdom of Heaven is one: the way that Christ took when He lived on earth. No other way exists, existed, or ever will exist. The Lord Jesus Christ said: "I am the way. Whoever wishes to follow Me must deny himself and take up his cross. Only then will he be following Me."

Therefore, every Christian, every human being, must know: which is the way, how to find it, and how to travel it.

On this theme the forth-coming articles will seek to elaborate.

What's Happening



COFFEE ROSTER

A BIG THANK YOU...

...to all those people who over the last year have helped on our coffee roster (including the generous donors of the various eats that are always available). Another year is almost over and the "post-Evening Liturgy" coffee has only been possible through your time and effort. Thank You.

AN INVITATION...

...to anyone who might like to add their name to our new coffee roster (about once every 2 months) or who could help out if we're ever 'stuck'.

If you'd like to help out or if you'd like more information, please phone Nicki Cassimatis on 899-1070 or catch me after the Liturgy either at the Candel desk in the Church or at the Bookshop.

BOOKSHOP

Our new shipments from America are arriving. Among them are books ordered for the first time. Titles cover a widerange of topics of interest, including books for children that would make ideal Christmas or Christening gifts.

You will also find a range of icon greeting cards, laminated icons and, for the first time, icon magnets.

For those unable to visit the Bookshop on a Saturday evening, we hope to open the Bookshop on a Sunday morning after the Liturgy once a month. Father Gregory will make announcements in due course.

For more information, contact Anthony Cassimatis on 899 1070.



LIBRARY

Our library selection is being updated as each new shipment of books arrives. This selection will also soon include an International Orthodox Women's Journal.

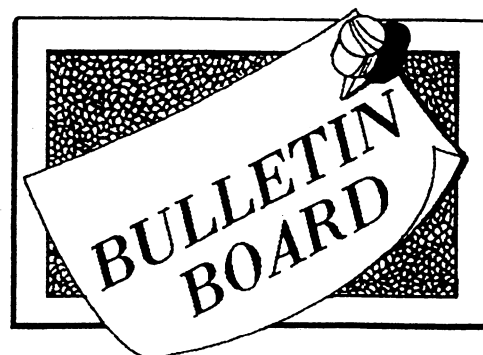
Opening Hours: After the Liturgy - Saturday evenings.

DIVINE LITURGY SCRIPTURE READINGS

Each week, at the Divine Liturgy, you will find a leaflet inside the Service Booklet or on the Candel desk. This leaflet contains the Epistle and Gospel Readings for the Day, along with commentaries by Saints of our Church and an explanation of the life of the Saint being commemorated that day.

Please feel free to keep and share these pamphlets with family and friends.

In Our Parish



FOOD and TOY DRIVE

With Father Gregory's blessing we will be organising a food and toy drive on Saturday 17 December. As in past years', food and toys will be collected at the Church of St George, West End, from 5pm on 17 December. The food and toys will go to needy within our community.

So have a look in those old cupboards for that stuffed toy you preloved as a kid and give another kid an opportunity to do the same. All food and toys or money joyfully accepted.

"Let your light shine in people's presence so that they may see your good works and praise your Father in Heaven."

Matthew 5:16

RETREAT - TAMBOURINE SEPTEMBER 1994

A very worthwhile Retreat was enjoyed by a small group of Parishoners on the Weekend 23-25 September.

Our speaker was Mr Ray Haddad, the Orthodox Church's prisons counsellor for NSW. Ray followed up on his discussion of Prison Ministry, a subject which he first shared with us on our July retreat.

As in the past, the retreat gave all present the opportunity to learn about important sacraments of the Church, to join in the worship of the Church and helped bring each one of us closer.

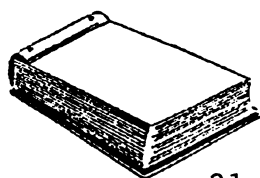
Retreats are organised for you. Ask anyone who has been on one: They are worthwhile! We are presently organising a Lenten retreat for Easter next year. Stay tuned for details.

With Love in Christ,
Anthony Cassimatis.

**Courses and Bible Study
are being planned for
1995. Watch this space
for more details.**

The Church: If the ocean is good and worthy of praise before God, how much more beautiful is the assembly of a Church like this: where the voices of men, of women, of children, arise in our prayers to God, mingling and re-sounding like the waves which beat upon the shore. This Church also enjoys a profound calm, and malicious spirits cannot trouble it. Deserve then, the approbation of the Lord by remaining faithful to such good guidance and fellowship in our Lord Jesus.

St Basil the Great.



"WONDROUS IS GOD IN HIS SAINTS" (Calendar of Feast Days)

21 Nov	Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple
16 Nov	St Matthew - Apostle & Evangelist
30 Nov	St Andrew - Apostle
4 Dec	St Barbara - Great Martyr
6 Dec	St Nicholas the Wonderworker
9 Dec	Conception of the Theotokos
12 Dec	St Spyridon the Wonderworker
15 Dec	St Eleftherios - Hieromartyr
25 Dec	Nativity of Christ
26 Dec	Synaxis of the Theotokos (Flight into Egypt)
27 Dec	St Stephen - First Martyr

ON PRAYER

From the *Ladder of Divine Ascent* by St John of Sinai, Step 28.

Prayer is by its very nature a dialogue and a union with God. Its effect is to hold the world together and to achieve a reconciliation with God. Prayer is the mother and daughter of tears. It is an expiation of sin, a bridge over temptation, a barrier against affliction. It wipes out conflict, is the work of Angels and the nourishment of all bodiless beings. Prayer is the future gladness, an endless work, a wellspring of virtues, a source of grace, hidden progress, food for the soul, an illumination of the mind, an axe against despair, a proof of hope, sorrow done away with. It is a mirror of progress, a demonstration of success, evidence of one's condition, the future revealed, a sign of glory.

Those of us about to stand before our King and God in order to speak with him should not move into this without preparation, lest - seeing us from afar without arms and without the dress appropriate to those who appear before a King - he should command his servants and slaves to bind us, to drive us out of his sight and to tear up our preparations.

When you set out to appear before the Lord, let the garment of your soul be woven throughout with the thread of wrongs suffered but forgotten. Otherwise, prayer will be of no benefit to you.

Pray in all simplicity. The Tax Collector and the Prodigal Son were reconciled to God with a single utterance. The attitude of prayer is one and the same for all, but there are various and many different prayers. Some talk with God as with a friend and master, lifting their praises and requests to him not for themselves but for others. Some look for greater treasures and glory and assurance in their prayers. Some ask to be freed entirely from their adversary. Some beg for rank and others for relief from all their debts. Some seek freedom from jail or for forgiveness of their offences.

Heartfelt thanksgiving should have first place in our book of prayer. Next should be confession and genuine contrition of the soul. After that should come our request to the King of all. This method of prayer is the best, as one of the monks was told by an Angel of the Lord...



SAINT EUPHEMIA

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(Her memory is celebrated 16 September)

The great martyr Euphemia lived during the most difficult and cruel years of Christianity - when Dioklitianos, the Christian persecutor was Emperor. She was born in Halkidona which is located opposite Constantinople. Her father, a rich man, was a Senator, and her mother was a devoted Christian. Euphemia grew up with love for the Lord, and her faith and virtues were further disclosed when the horrifying persecution against the Christians began.

When the day was approaching of the great festivities in honour of a pagan god, the Governor commanded that everyone, young or old, willing or unwilling to attend. His threats were explicit - anyone who opposed the pagan authority and didn't appear at the temple was condemned to death by torture.

The Christians, faithful in the teachings of the Lord, congregated in groups and met in houses or fled into the wilderness. Euphemia was leader of one of these groups. Many Christians were captured, among them Euphemia and her companions. For several days they were imprisoned and whipped mercilessly. Finally, unsuccessful in his attempts to force the Christians to renounce Christ, the Governor had them taken to Dioklitianos.

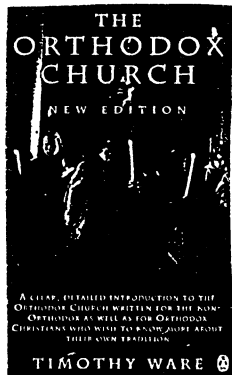
However, the Governor kept Euphemia and tried to make her consider her youth and to inflame in her the desire to live life. Useless in his endeavours he subjected her to various tortures. She was tied to the wheel, stretching her body to its limits. The pain was excruciating but Euphemia's thoughts and love - her whole being - was focused on Christ.

Her flesh was scraped with sharp stones; she was made to walk on sharp objects, piercing her skin; she was thrown into a large tank of carnivorous marine creatures. The Governor expected her to be eaten alive but she came to no harm. He then had pieces of her flesh cut and fried in an open fire.

Euphemia endured the horrifying tortures, praying to the Lord to keep her strong until the end and asked him to take her from this existence and into the true and everlasting life.

Finally, she was thrown into the arena. The lions did not harm her but one of the bears bit her which resulted in her holy spirit to ascend into heaven and thus receive the crown of martyrdom. The year was 303 AD. A large earthquake shook the city and while everyone ran to save themselves, Euphemia's parents took her body and buried it with reverence. Saint Euphemia remained buried at that place for many years where miracles took place and many illnesses were cured. Her remains are now to be found in a chapel built in her name.





'ORTHODOXY CLAIMS TO BE UNIVERSAL'

SINCE ITS FIRST PUBLICATION THIRTY YEARS AGO, TIMOTHY WARE'S BOOK HAS BECOME ESTABLISHED THROUGHOUT THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD AS THE STANDARD INTRODUCTION TO THE ORTHODOX CHURCH. ORTHODOXY CONTINUES TO BE A SUBJECT OF ENORMOUS INTEREST AMONG WESTERN CHRISTIANS, AND THE AUTHOR BELIEVES THAT AN UNDERSTANDING OF ITS STANDPOINT IS NECESSARY BEFORE THE ROMAN CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT CHURCHES CAN BE REUNITED. IN THIS NEWLY REVISED AND UPDATED EDITION HE EXPLAINS THE ORTHODOX VIEWS ON SUCH WIDELY RANGING MATTERS AS ECUMENICAL COUNCILS, SACRAMENTS, FREE WILL, PURGATORY, THE PAPACY AND THE RELATION BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT ORTHODOX CHURCHES.

IN PART ONE HE DESCRIBES THE HISTORY OF THE EASTERN CHURCH OVER THE LAST TWO THOUSAND YEARS WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO ITS PROBLEMS IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY RUSSIA; AND IN PART TWO HE EXPLAINS THE BELIEFS AND WORSHIP OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH TODAY. FINALLY, HE CONSIDERS THE POSSIBILITIES OF REUNION BETWEEN EAST AND WEST. IN THIS LATEST EDITION, HE TAKES FULL ACCOUNT OF THE TOTALLY NEW SITUATION CONFRONTING EASTERN CHRISTIANS SINCE THE COLLAPSE OF COMMUNISM.

SECOND EDITION

#16

The Orthodox Way

A classic account of the belief, worship and life of the Orthodox Church which raises the basic issues of theology: God as hidden yet revealed, the problem of evil, the nature of salvation, the meaning of faith, prayer, death and what lies beyond.

"I have never, in reviewing a book, felt such a powerful desire to have the wealth to present each reader with a copy."

196 pp.

Ronald Walls, Fireacres Chronicle



\$ 10.50

CHILDREN'S BOOKS & ACTIVITIES

THE ADVENTURES OF SPERO, THE ORTHODOX CHURCH MOUSE

J. Sarlas-Fontana

A delightful children's Christmas story and activity book designed for ages 4 - 7. Hands-on experiences and activities. Children will learn about the birth of Jesus as seen through the eyes of Spero.

On Order

GOD IS WITH US — BIBLE STORIES FOR CHILDREN

S. Koulomzin

This Orthodox book of Bible stories from the Old and New Testaments is illustrated in iconographic style. Stories include Creation, Noah, Moses, and the life and ministry of Jesus. Excellent for home and church use.

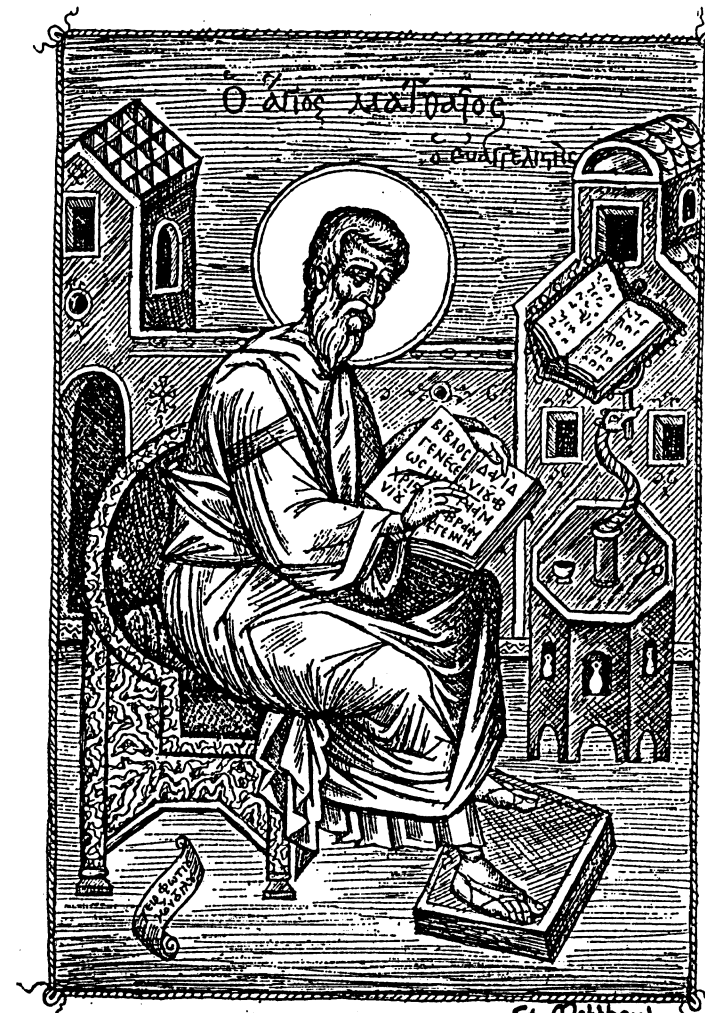
\$ 12

A SPECIAL GIFT TO GOD

I. Theodore

A delightful children's book tells the story of a young boy's gift to God in the form of a prosforo for the Divine Liturgy. Excellent color illustrations and an imaginative text make this a lovely gift for children.

On Order



BOOKS FOR ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS

All books available from St Georges
Orthodox Church South Brisbane
Contact Anthony & Nicki Cassimatis 8991070

Issue Two

RAISING THEM RIGHT:



A SAINT'S ADVICE ON RAISING CHILDREN

by Saint Theophan the Recluse.

Wise advice on bringing up children from St. Theophan the Recluse

On Order



Children in the Church Today An Orthodox Perspective

This book encompasses many aspects of Christian life: marriage and the family, prayer, Christian education, liturgical and spiritual life, leisure time and social life, the teen years, and more. Sister Magdalen's major emphasis is that if children are "surrounded by prayer and love, they will grow up as spiritual persons and thus fulfill their human vocation."

104 pp.

\$ 9-50

Sister Magdalen

The Bible

BIBLE AND THE HOLY FATHERS FOR ORTHODOXY

compiled and edited by
Johanna Manley

This remarkable book provides commentary on daily scripture readings for Orthodox Christians. Most of the comments are taken from Fathers of the Church while others are from contemporary Orthodox theologians. Contains numerous appendices and indices to facilitate use for Bible study or sermons. "...The reader can find in these pages an inexhaustible source of truth and wisdom" (Fr. John Breack). "...(a) marvelously rich and varied anthology" (Bishop Kallistos Ware). 1126 pages.

Hardbound

\$ 75

The Year of Grace of the Lord

A scriptural and liturgical commentary on the calendar of the Orthodox Church, this book is a guide to the scriptural readings and prayers, and to the spiritual growth in Christ that is opened to us. The liturgical year is "an abridgement of the history of salvation." A helpful list of reference notes which includes historical and theological material is given at the end of each chapter.

254 pp.

\$ 14-50

A Monk of the Eastern Church



On the Divine Liturgy

The Feast of Faith

An Invitation to the Love Feast of the Kingdom of God

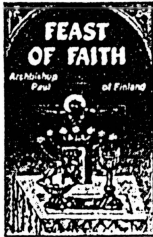
Using simple, accessible language, the author guides the faithful towards a deeper understanding of the rites and prayers of the liturgy, the center of the Church's life, and thus towards a more fruitful participation in the Banquet of the Kingdom.

"...should be in the hands of every Orthodox Christian and anyone else who desires a straightforward, lucid and spirited commentary on the main service of Orthodox worship."

John Rexine, Hellenic Chronicle

107 pp.

Archbishop Paul of Finland



\$ 9-50

ICONOGRAPHY

The Meaning of Icons

Leonid Ouspensky & Vladimir Lossky

This revised edition of the classic work on iconography speaks of the techniques, language and interpretation of icons in the context of theology and faith. Wide use of scripture, liturgical texts and patristic sources illumine the commentary and analysis of the main types of icons.

In the nearly 40 years since the publication of the first German edition of this book, [The Meaning of Icons] has lost virtually none of its value for researchers, collectors and in general anyone who is interested in iconography...this new edition is heartily recommended to the reader....

Konrad Onasch
Theologische Literatur-Zeitung



\$ 46-